

# Wellness News

November 2023

## This issue

Diabetes Awareness Month

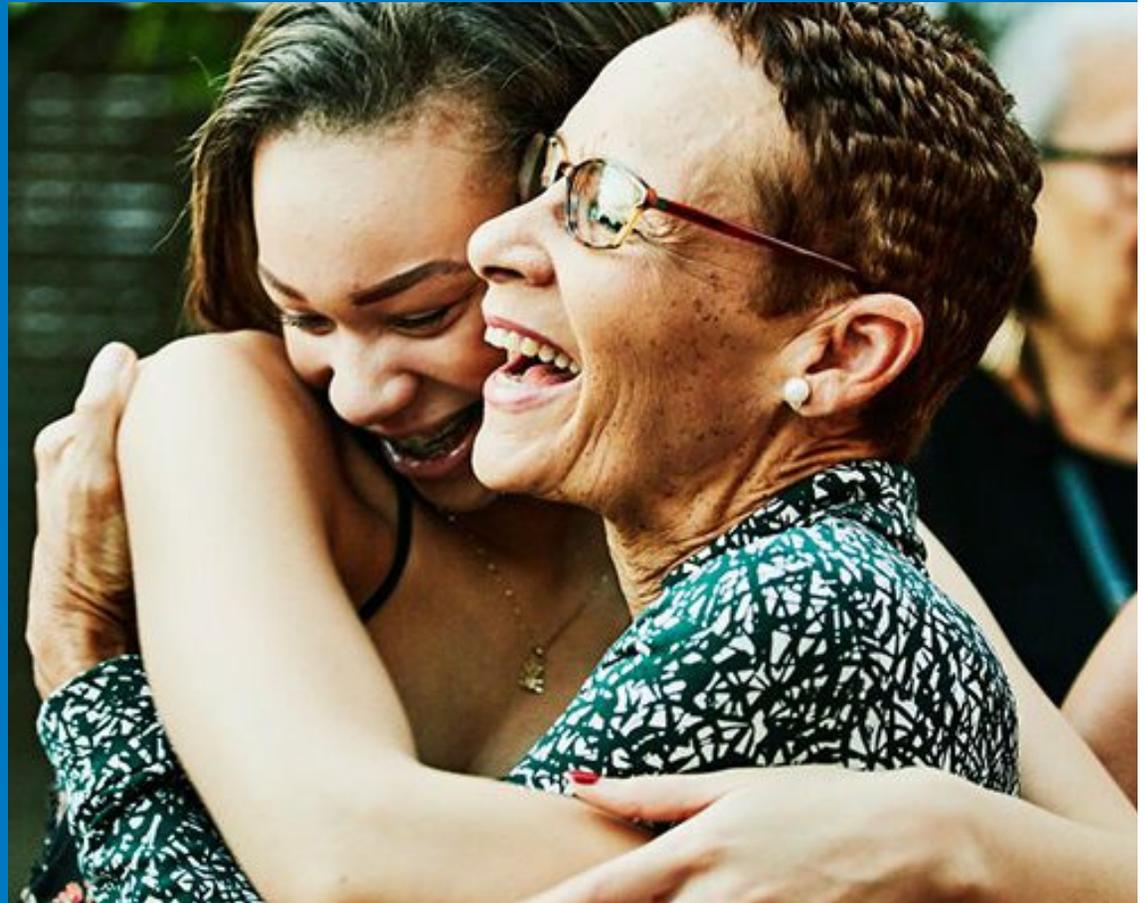
\*How Family Members Can Help

Preventing Diabetes

Giving Thanks!

Avoid Overeating at Thanksgiving

Recipe: Waldorf Salad



“Be thankful for what you have; you’ll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don’t have, you will never, ever have enough.”

– Oprah Winfrey



**Anthem members:** You can view and manage your benefits, access wellness tools and resources to improve your overall wellbeing. Simply scan this QR code with your smartphone’s camera to download the Sydney Health app.

*Tip: Anthem.com and Sydney Health use the same username and password!*

# Diabetes

**37.3 million Americans have diabetes, and 1 in 5 don't know it.**

Many Americans with diabetes have not yet been diagnosed and are not aware of the health risks.<sup>1</sup> We are here to support and empower you to be your healthiest self. Diabetes is a condition where the body can't make insulin or does not use it well. Insulin is a hormone that helps our bodies use the energy from the glucose in the food we eat. Without it, glucose levels in the blood stream can become too high.

## How Family Members Can Help with Diabetes Management

Diabetes has been called a family disease — when one person is diagnosed, family and close friends also can be affected. It's natural to want to be supportive when someone you love has a chronic medical condition. The first step is to learn what you can about the disease. Then take some time to communicate the support you need to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### Understanding Diabetes Basics

Type 1 and type 2 diabetes are different diseases. However, both involve the body's inability to process sugar — also called glucose — in the blood. This means cells aren't getting the energy they need, and that excess glucose builds up in the blood. Serious health problems can result, including nerve damage, heart disease, blindness, stroke, and kidney failure.

**Lending Support:** Family members are an important source of support for people managing diabetes. Start by letting them know your condition doesn't have to stand in the way of an active life. By managing diabetes through a healthy diet and regular exercise, you can better maintain healthy blood sugar levels. Your family can help by:

- **Eating together.** A meal that's healthy for someone with diabetes is also healthy for everyone else. Family-friendly diabetic recipes can include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein such as fish and poultry.
- **Exercising together.** Physical activity is important to staying healthy with diabetes. Having an exercise buddy can motivate you to get up and keep moving. Walking, jogging, swimming and dancing all can be a part of this program – and all can be more enjoyable as a family activity.
- **Recognizing possible problems.** High blood sugar (hyperglycemia) can cause frequent urination, extreme thirst, blurry vision and fatigue. Low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) can cause fatigue, inability to speak or think clearly, sweating, twitching and passing out. A sudden drop in blood sugar can be especially dangerous. Ask your loved ones to keep a supply of sugary candy handy, in case you show signs of hypoglycemia. They should also call for medical help if this occurs.

**How Not to Help:** Supporting your efforts to manage diabetes doesn't mean hovering or being judgmental. A loved one might think their advice or gentle criticism will be helpful, but it might cause more stress. Here are some thoughts you might share if you're facing such a situation:

- **Nagging doesn't help.** Criticizing you for your menu choices or exercise habits can actually lead to more unhealthy behavior. Instead, ask them to provide encouragement and support when you make healthier choices.
- **Their own diet can be a problem.** Having separate meals prepared for you can lead to feeling isolated. Instead, consider stocking the kitchen with food that's healthy for everyone in the house. You'll all be improving your diet, and you will feel more included.
- **Take the lead.** If you're an older teen or adult, you can make your own diabetes-management decisions. Ask your family to ask you what they can do to help, instead of trying to control your behavior.

Over time, this can cause damage to body tissue and organs.<sup>1</sup> There are three main types of diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

Type 1 diabetes can affect anyone, but most often it develops in children or young adults. People with this type of diabetes produce very little insulin, or none at all. There is no way to prevent or cure type 1 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common type. People with type 2 diabetes either make too little insulin, or their bodies aren't able to use it as they should.

 Gestational diabetes (GDM) is a form of diabetes that appears during pregnancy. While GDM usually goes away after pregnancy, it can put women and their babies at higher risk for type 2 diabetes.



Log into Sydney, select MENU on the bottom navigation bar, then select MyHealth Dashboard, then Featured Programs then ConditionCare (Diabetes type 1 and 2 – pediatric and adult). Pregnant? Enroll in Building Healthy Families program.

Not an Anthem member? Visit the American Diabetes Association website at [diabetes.org](https://diabetes.org) for tips and resources in your community, like a local support group.

# Diabetes Prevention

## Prediabetes risk factors for type 2 diabetes

If you have prediabetes, it means your blood glucose (sugar) levels are higher than normal—but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.<sup>2</sup>

While it is not clear why some people develop prediabetes and type 2 diabetes, and others don't, these risk factors can increase the risk of prediabetes, including:<sup>2</sup>

- Being overweight or inactive.
- Being 45 or older.
- Having a family history of type 2 diabetes.
- Having had diabetes during pregnancy.
- Being Black, Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic, or Pacific Islander American.

## Symptoms of diabetes

If you have any of the following diabetes symptoms, see your doctor about having your blood sugar tested:<sup>3</sup>

- Urinate a lot, often at night.
- Are very thirsty.
- Are very hungry.
- Have numb or tingling hands or feet.
- Have very dry skin.
- Have sores that heal slowly.
- Have more infections than usual.

## Preventing type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is a serious, chronic health condition that can lead to other serious health issues, such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, and kidney failure. If you can prevent or even delay type 2 diabetes, you can lower your risk for all those other conditions.<sup>4</sup>

You can usually prevent or delay type 2 diabetes with achievable lifestyle changes:<sup>4,5,6</sup>

- Eat a healthy diet.
- Quit Smoking.
- Exercise regularly.
- Maintain a healthy weight.

Having regular doctor appointments can also help you prevent, diagnose, or manage type 2 diabetes. To find a doctor, please visit Sydney, [anthem.com](http://anthem.com) or call us at the number on the back of your member ID card.



Scan the QR code to get started through the Sydney Health app. You can use your existing health plan login credentials to sign in. You can also find the Lark DPP screen in Sydney Health under Programs in My Health Dashboard.

**Note:** this program is only available on mobile devices.



**What it is:** Lark's Virtual DPP coaching helps you reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes by addressing your underlying risk factors.

**Benefits to you:** Lark's personalized coaching helps you make small lifestyle changes that add up over time and can lower your risk of developing diabetes by more than 50%.

**Cost:** Free to you and your covered adult dependents.

**Getting started:** From your mobile device, take a 1-minute survey to see if you are eligible for the program.



Log into Sydney, select MENU on the bottom navigation bar, then select MyHealth Dashboard, then Featured Programs then Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)



Non- Anthem members or Anthem members who do not currently have the Anthem DPP program. Check back at the beginning of the year to see the many programs and services offered through Anthem.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: About Diabetes (accessed July 18, 2022); [cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/diabetes.html](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/diabetes.html).

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Diabetes Risk Factors (accessed July 18, 2022); [cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/risk-factors.html](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/risk-factors.html).

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Diabetes Symptoms (accessed July 18, 2022); [cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/symptoms.html).

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Lifestyle Change Program Details (accessed July 18, 2022); [cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/lcp-details.html](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/lcp-details.html).

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Tips From Former Smokers: Smoking and Diabetes (accessed July 18, 2022); [cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/diabetes.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/diabetes.html).

<sup>6</sup> National Library of Medicine: International Diabetes Federation: a consensus on Type 2 diabetes prevention (accessed July 18, 2022); [pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/).



# Giving thanks can make you happier

Each holiday season comes with high expectations for a cozy and festive time of year. However, for many this time of year is tinged with sadness, anxiety, or depression. Certainly, major depression or a severe anxiety disorder benefits most from professional help. But what about those who just feel lost or overwhelmed or down at this time of year? Research suggests that one aspect of the Thanksgiving season can lift the spirits, and it's built right into the holiday — being grateful.

The word gratitude is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness (depending on the context). In some ways, gratitude encompasses all these meanings. Gratitude is an appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible. With gratitude, people acknowledge the goodness in their lives. In the process, people usually recognize that the source of that goodness lies at least partially outside themselves. As a result, being grateful also helps people connect to something larger than themselves as individuals — whether to other people, nature, or a higher power.

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

People feel and express gratitude in multiple ways. They can apply it to the past (retrieving positive memories and being thankful for elements of childhood or past blessings), the present (not taking good fortune for granted as it comes), and the future (maintaining a hopeful and optimistic attitude). Regardless of the inherent or current level of someone's gratitude, it's a quality that individuals can successfully cultivate further.



1. **Don't skip meals.** It's tempting to skip meals to "save room" for the big event, but it almost always backfires. When you ignore your hunger all day, you're more likely to ignore your fullness cues by the time you start eating. Treat Thanksgiving like any other day and don't let yourself get too hungry.

*I recognize some people do well with intermittent fasting. If that's you and you can break your fast at a massive Thanksgiving feast without overeating, carry on.*

2. **Eat breakfast that includes enough protein.** Eating something like eggs or Greek yogurt. Why? Protein-containing breakfasts help curb appetite all day long. In numerous research studies, participants who eat a protein-rich breakfast tend to eat less over the next 24 hours, even at all-you-can-eat-buffets (aka Thanksgiving!).

3. **Don't start the meal with bread.** Eating carbohydrates in your first few bites triggers the release of hunger-stimulating hormones. You're better off eating a few bites of turkey to start, which has the opposite effect. Plus, there are so many carbohydrate-rich foods at Thanksgiving, that you're better off skipping bread entirely and saving room for tastier options, like mashed potatoes, yams, and pie. Starting the meal off right will help you naturally stop before your stomach feels like it's going to burst.

If you have any form of blood sugar challenges, such as diabetes or gestational diabetes, you'll need to be particularly careful of all the carbohydrate-rich foods at the meal. Consider scoping out what's on the table so you can choose your top 1 or 2 starchy options that are a must-have before the side dishes start getting passed around the table. For example, if you don't absolutely love mashed potatoes or creamed corn, just skip them. Some Thanksgiving meals have so many starchy sides that even if you have a mini portion of each one, you'll still over-do it if you try them all.

4. **Chew.** Well, duh. Right? Before you roll your eyes and skip ahead to #5, you might be surprised how often this comes up. Most of us are so eager to shovel food in our mouth (because we're so painfully hungry) that we forget to chew enough. Eating is not a race. Practice mindfully chewing every bite completely before you take the next. It'll slow you down, help you digest your food better, and give your body a chance to tell you it's full before it's too late.

5. **Enjoy the moment.** Before you dig in, take a second to notice and appreciate the food on the table – the colors, aromas, the love that went into preparing each dish. With each bite, savor the flavors, texture, mouthfeel, sounds, richness, crunchiness or softness, saltiness or sweetness. **This is a meal to be relished, not rushed. <— This, my friends, is mindful eating.**

Of course, the holiday isn't just about the food. So, keep the conversation going during dinner. That will naturally help you eat more slowly and shift the focus to what really matters – spending quality time with your loved ones and enjoying a meal together.

Allow yourself to set your fork down between bites and appreciate this moment.

# Classic Waldorf Salad

There's a reason this **Waldorf salad** belongs on every holiday dinner table. It's a symphony of crisp apples, celery, grapes, and crunchy walnuts, tossed in a tangy-sweet, creamy dressing that adds the perfect refreshing touch.

**PREP:** 15minutes mins

**TOTAL:** 15minutes mins

**SERVINGS:** 4 servings

**AUTHOR:** [Lisa Bryan](#)

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons Greek yogurt (dairy or dairy-free)
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 green apples, diced
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup grapes, halved
- 1 cup whole walnuts or pecans, toasted and roughly chopped
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- Optional: butter lettuce leaves for serving

## INSTRUCTIONS

**Make dressing.** In a small bowl, stir together the Greek yogurt, mayonnaise, lemon juice, and honey. Set aside.

**Toss it all together.** In a large bowl, add the green apples, celery, grapes, walnuts, parsley, salt, and mayo dressing. Stir it all together until everything is evenly coated.

## TIPS

- Make sure that the toasted nuts have fully cooled before you add them to the salad. Otherwise, they'll melt the yogurt-based dressing.
- You can use any tart and crisp apple in this recipe, I just prefer Granny Smith's.

## NUTRITION

CALORIES: 341KCAL | CARBOHYDRATES: 29G | PROTEIN: 7G | FAT: 25G | SATURATED FAT: 3G | POLYUNSATURATED FAT: 17G | MONOUNSATURATED FAT: 4G | TRANS FAT: 0.01G | CHOLESTEROL: 4MG | SODIUM: 363MG | POTASSIUM: 401MG | FIBER: 5G | SUGAR: 21G | VITAMIN A: 367IU | VITAMIN C: 11MG | CALCIUM: 66MG | IRON: 1MG

